

**FROM THE CHAIR**

May I wish everyone a happy, peaceful and especially a healthy New Year. So many of our members have had serious illnesses in 2016. Many thanks are due to the committee and volunteers who organised the very successful Wine Tasting Evening and Christmas Party. Much hard work goes on behind the scene to make these events run smoothly.

Two of our committee members are standing down this year so we will need replacements. Please think about joining the committee. It is not an onerous task; in fact, you will quite likely enjoy the experience. Nomination forms are on our website and they will be available at the January meeting. We have 468 members so surely there are at least two who could volunteer. Election of the committee for this year will take place at the AGM on February 8th.

Membership is due for renewal at the February meeting. Inflation has now caught up with us and the fee will increase to £6 for 2017 (£8.50 if you wish to order the Third Age Magazine which is posted to you). This is still very low in comparison with other U3As.

Margaret McDermott

**GROUP NEWS**

On the same theme we need people willing to organise some new groups. Our most recent survey indicated that Bird watching, French and Local history are of interest to our members but any other ideas are more than welcome. Our Reading group is currently not meeting but could be restarted if an organiser can be found.

Organising a group is not onerous and can be shared between two or even several people. We find that many groups share the work between the members who can each organize a session. There are many resources available for group leaders on the National U3A website including advice sheets and newsletters as well as media that can be borrowed for use with your group. There are also around 50 subject advisors who can be consulted about running or starting a group.

Please have a think about how you might contribute and talk to us about your ideas.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**



Sunset in High Lane in early December. Thanks to Marlene Brookes for the photograph.

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**IMPORTANT - GROUP LEADERS**

Please would all group leaders prepare a report on last year's activities for the AGM. If you cannot attend please ask someone in your group to read the report or send a copy to Pam Curley.

**FROM THE EDITOR**

Items for the newsletter from members are always welcome so if you have any suggestions for content or articles of interest to U3A members please contact me at [newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk)

The next edition of the newsletter will be the March 2017 edition. Please can you get your contributions to me by 24 February?

### MONTHLY MEETING: NOVEMBER

At the November meeting Ted Doan General Manager of Stockport Plaza gave an interesting talk about the history of the Plaza and the upcoming developments. 10,000 tons of rock were hewn out of the surrounding rock resulting in the stage being underground. The Plaza opened its doors to the public in October 1932. Early films were silent movies accompanied on the organ which is still in situ today.

Attendances dwindled and the Plaza was sold to Mecca bingo in the 1960s. Bingo at the Plaza ceased in the 1990s and following an enthusiastic campaign the Plaza was bought by The Stockport Plaza Trust in March 2000. A band of dedicated volunteers managed to get the theatre ready for the opening show on 7 October 2000. Since then an ongoing programme of refurbishment has meant that the Plaza now offers almost nightly shows including films, live stage presentations, organ concerts and much more.

### CHRISTMAS PARTY

The December meeting was once again our traditional Christmas party. Peter Turner gave a fascinating presentation entitled Sleight of Mind where he



presented a selection of experiments designed to confuse and trick the mind. This was followed by a delicious afternoon tea prepared by the redoubtable

team of helpers. Much brain twisting went on with the accompanying Christmas themed quiz.

The afternoon ended with a poem written and read by Glenda Miller entitled 'The Miracle' and a couple of carols to send us home with the festive spirit.

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### CAROL SERVICE: NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

High Lane U3A held its first carol service on 8 December at St. Thomas' Church High Lane. After the service, members and friends gathered for light refreshments in the Church Hall.

### ANNUAL LUNCH

This year's Annual Lunch is on Monday 6 March 2017. The venue is Hazel Grove Golf Club and we have a mouthwatering choice of dishes on the menu. Tickets cost £20 and will be on sale at the January and February meetings. Numbers are limited so don't delay in booking your places.

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### LEARN SOMETHING NEW IN 2017

There are many opportunities for learning new skills available through U3A and local organizations. Here are just some of the courses starting over the next few weeks, many of which can be studied in your own home.

### WEA COURSES

A number of courses start in January including Family History, Art, Creative writing, Computers in Manchester; French in Altrincham; History of Art in Disley; Art in Stockport; The Iron Age in Cheshire in Macclesfield and a range of courses at Cheadle Hulme including Digital photography and Creative writing.

Details at [www.wea.org.uk](http://www.wea.org.uk) or from Rosemary Broadhurst 01625 877255

### ONLINE MOOCs FOR 2017

The choice of subjects we can study for free online is amazing. FutureLearn has over 100 courses starting in January and February including:

- Exercise for the prevention and treatment of disease
- Gravity, black holes et al
- The Night Sky
- Italian
- Japanese culture
- Spanish
- Genealogy
- Managing investments
- Writing fiction
- Robotics

And many many more!

You will need to register for the course(s) by clicking the Join link on the relevant web page.  
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses>

**U3A MAGAZINE: THIRD AGE MATTERS**

The U3A magazine is published five times each year and contains articles and features of interest to U3A members, plus news and information from U3A national office and U3As across the country. You can get the magazine delivered to your

home for £2.50 (for all five editions) by subscribing to the magazine when you pay your annual fee.

**AVOIDING SCAMS**

Financial fraud increased 53% in the year from January-July 2015 to January-July 2016.

Take Five is a national campaign that offers straightforward and impartial advice to help everyone protect themselves from preventable financial fraud. This includes email deception and phone-based scams as well as online fraud – particularly where criminals impersonate trusted organisations.

See the website for information and a short video.

<https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/>

**BRIDGE CORNER**

High Lane U3A has three very well supported Bridge groups and a waiting list of players. A new group could be started but we need people prepared to organize it. If you feel you can help please see Margaret McDermott.

**Roman Keycard Blackwood** is an extension of the familiar Blackwood convention which asks your partner for aces. Instead of just the four aces we have five keycards; the four aces and the King of trumps.

The response to 4NT when playing Roman Keycard Blackwood is as follows

5C – 1 or 4 keycards

5D – 3 or 0 keycards

5H – 2 keycards without the Queen of trumps

5S – 2 keycards and the Queen of trumps

This is referred to as 14-30 and is the most common system – but note that some people play different systems.

You can ask for Kings in the usual way if you wish but bear in mind that you already know about the King of Trumps so there are only three Kings left.

And finally – this poem was given to the editor by Joan Winterburn who got it from Marion Dellow who went to live in Vancouver ten years ago. Joan says that many of the Bridge group will remember her. There are versions with slightly different words on various bridge sites but the author of the poem appears to have been lost.

**Ode to Bridge**

I'm giving up bridge - tonight's my last night. It's Amen to Staymen, I give up the fight. The insults and muddles are giving me troubles; I can't sleep at night for thinking of doubles.

What to bid, what to lead, and which cards have been played? Did my partner's discard mean she wanted a spade? So for now it's all over - I'm off to the backwood. I'm bidding good riddance to Gerber and Blackwood.

I can't stand the hassle, I can't stand the pain. I'm getting those bad cards again and again. I'm giving up bridge - tonight's a bad night. Declarer is horrid and nothing's gone right.

My partner's a dope and I'm losing all hope. And when she says 'double' I know we're in trouble. My points are not high and I'm wondering why She keeps on bidding right up to the sky.

We're in seven spades and my nerves are all frayed. When wonder of wonders - the contract is made! We've got all the tricks, the defenders look grey, And I have to admit that my partner's okay.

But ... I'm giving up bridge - tonight's my last night. Farewell to conventions, I give up the fight! So I end with some words that I know to be true. Bridge is a game, not for me but for you.

So be kind to your partners and don't mind their cheek For it's only a game - oh! and see you next week! *Anon*

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS****2017 MEETINGS**

Meetings start on 11 January 2017 with a talk by Naomi Lewis entitled Queen Victoria's visit to Salford. The February meeting is our AGM.

11 January	Queen Victoria's visit to Salford: Naomi Lewis
8 February	AGM
8 March	History of Cartoons: Ian Barclay
12 April	The Mellor Dig: Anne Hearle
10 May	The Mysterious Life of Agatha Christie: Pat Osborne
14 June	The Kinder Mass Trespass: Keith Warrender
12 July	The King and I: Norma Walmsley
9 August	Tax, Care and Toy Boys: Oliver Hall
13 September	Antiques, Auctions and TV: Nick Hall
11 October	Feeding Wild Birds: George Worthington
8 November	Debate/discussion
13 December	Xmas party My Life in Music: Rebecca Done

**FORTHCOMING TRAVEL GROUP EVENTS**

Contact: Margaret McDermott or Ruth Smith

17-22 May	CORNWALL. FULL There is a waiting list. Balance due at FEBRUARY meeting
30 Jul – 3 Aug	YORKSHIRE. 4 nights HB at Parsonage Hotel Escrick. £395 single supp. £95 Includes cost of coach, hotel and entrance fees. Deposit £50 at MARCH meeting
14-28 July	CRUISE. British Isles from Southampton on P&O Adonia
28 Aug – 1 Sept	IRELAND. Flight from Manchester to Dublin. 4 nights HB at McWilliam Park Hotel Claremorris County Mayo. £560. Single Supp. £65. Includes flight, hotel, coach hire for each day and entrance fees. Deposit £60 at JANUARY meeting

**NATIONAL AND REGIONAL U3A EVENTS**

12 Feb	Matinee concert, talk and lunch. Birmingham Symphonty Hall
31 March	Energy conference. Penrith.
11 April	"Search for life in the universe". Birkbeck University.

**LOCAL HAPPENINGS**

Now – 28 Jan	Sweet Charity. Royal Exchange theatre
Now – 29 Jan	Billy Elliott. Palace theatre
5-6 Jan	Swan Lake. Buxton Opera House
11 Jan	RSC Live. The Tempest. Stockport Plaza
11-14 Jan	Copenhagen. Garrick theatre
12 Jan	NTLive. No man's Land. Various venues.
12 Jan	ELO. Buxton Opera House
16 Jan 20 Jan	Tom Paxton. Lowry theatre Tom Paxton. Buxton Opera House
20 Jan	Hallé Tea Dance - A New Year Gala. Hallé St Peter's
20 Jan	Craig Ogden: Bach to The Beatles. Bridgewater Hall.
28 Jan	The Hallé Movie Classics, Bridgewater Hall.
28 Jan – 4 Feb	Di and Viv and Rose. Garrick theatre
28 Jan – 4 Feb	On Golden Pond by Ernest Thompson. Chad's theatre
2 Feb	NT Live. Amadeus. Plaza
3-25 Feb	The house of Bernarda Alba. Royal Exchange theatre
4 Feb	Organ Coffee morning. Stockport Plaza
5 Feb	An Evening with Gervase Phinn. Lowry theatre.
9-11 Feb	Moscow City Ballet - Swan Lake. Palace Theatre
16 Feb	NT Live. St Joan. Various venues
21Feb	Rory Bremner: Party Political. Lowry theatre.

## GROUP REPORTS

### BALLET APPRECIATION GROUPS 3 AND 4

The groups had a break during November and December. They are restarting in the new year with a performance of the Northern Ballet's production of A Christmas Carol.

At the following session I will show a recent recording of two pieces choreographed by Frederick Ashton: The Two Pigeons and Rhapsody.

Meg Humphries

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### CHURCHES AND PUBS

#### November: All Saints, Ashover

The journey to All Saints Church, Ashover situated between Chesterfield and Matlock was made even more enjoyable by the wonderful autumnal colours and picturesque views. Our first impressions of the village were of "Crispin Inn" with its plaque indicating it originated in 1416 when Thomas Babington with several other Ashover men returned from the battle of Agincourt. In 1646 the Inn was frequented by King Charles I troops when opposing Oliver Cromwell's army.

After admiring the impressive exterior of the church we entered to be greeted by a very welcoming cup of coffee and enjoyed an informative talk by Peter Lord, treasurer of the church.

Ashover church was mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086 and a plaque inside the main door lists the rectors from that date. However, Ashover Church as it stands today was built between 1350 and 1419 by Thomas Babington the great-grandfather of Anthony Babington, executed for the plot, on behalf of Mary Queen of Scots, to murder Elizabeth I.

Lead mining was big industry in the area from Roman times and the Norman lead font dated 1150 was a rare survivor, most being melted down for bullets during the civil war – but was saved by being buried in the nearby kitchen garden at Eastwood Hall by an Immanuel Bourne. Little remains today of the original stained glass as these were removed for the lead again to make bullets. The church therefore was vandalized at the time of the civil war but today it remains open to the public - a tribute to the integrity of the people of Ashover. The intricate carved oak reredos behind the north altar was the work of George Eastwood who also carved all the pews and pew ends, all varying designs – but sadly he died on the eve of their completion in 1903.

After a stroll round the fascinating churchyard and discovering gravestones of one of our group's ancestors – a Chesterfield family, we headed into Tansley to the Gate Inn for a delicious lunch appreciated by all. A big thank you to Paul and Barbara for organizing such an interesting and enjoyable day out!

Pam and Peter Cooke



## December: St. Peter's Fairfield, Buxton



Our last visit of 2016 took 46 of us to St. Peter's Church at Fairfield. We were welcomed by Marion, one of the church wardens, with tea and coffee and biscuits which was very enjoyable. After the light refreshments we took our places in the pews for the talk on the Church. This talk was given by David Owen and was one of the best talks we have had. He started by saying a small prayer; the first time this has been done on our many visits to different Churches.

The first Chapel in Fairfield was founded in 1260 by the Dean of Lichfield. At this time Fairfield was in the parish of Hope.

In 1595 Thomas Dakin sent a petition to the Queen asking for a minister for the Chapel and for assistance with the Church building as it was in a poor state of repair. The people of Fairfield made out a case in support and asked that an Almshouse should be built for six poor men who lived in Fairfield.

In 1815 there was a petition to build a new Church and in 1837 Fairfield was made a separate parish from Hope. The present Church was built in 1839. In 1893 a new organ was installed and the porch was built in 1897. On 12th of November 1901 the foundation for the enlargement of the Church was laid and on All Saints Day 1902 the extension was consecrated.

Dry rot and woodworm were found in 1959 in the south transept and roof trusses. These were replaced with new beams and this took most of 1960 to complete. The organ was restored in 1994 at a cost of £25,000. There are six stained glass windows in the Church of which the best is the one above the altar. In this window there is a biplane included which was the first window in the country to contain an aeroplane.

The Churchyard has been here as long as the Church. To the west of the Church tower is a natural limestone mound surmounted by a gritstone pillar which used to be the Churchyard cross and afterwards the support for a sundial.

From the Church we made our way to The Church Inn at Chelmorton for an excellent Christmas lunch.

Thanks to everyone who offered lifts and did the write ups and supported Churches and pubs during 2016. Our Church visits start again in April. The programme for 2017 is

- 5 April St. Oswalds Brereton Cheshire.
- May On Holiday.
- 7 June St. Chad. Longford, Derbyshire.
- 5 July St. Bartholomews. Marsden, Yorkshire.
- 6 Sept St. Peter's. Leighton-cum-Minshull Vernon. Cheshire.
- 4 Oct St. Mary and St. Laurence. Bolsover. Derbyshire.
- 1 Nov All Saints. Odd Rode, Cheshire.
- 6 Dec St. Michael and All Saints, Mottram in Longdale, Greater Manchester.

Paul Kenneth

## CINEMA

The latest film we attended was "A Street Cat Named Bob" adapted from the book of the same name which was a "feel good" experience, enjoyed by all.

The Christmas period has brought with it a selection of films for a younger audience. I would suggest that members who are feeling withdrawal symptoms try looking at the films on offer locally at the Stockport Plaza and Savoy Heaton Moor.

Normal service for the Regent will resume as soon as possible.

Sheila Harrop

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## CRAFT AND NEEDLEWORK

We rounded off a productive year with our sale of work and a raffle in November. This year the raffle raised £105 for Breast Cancer Care, a charity close to the hearts of members of the group who have been affected directly or indirectly by the illness. Many thanks to the members of High Lane U3A for their generous support for our annual raffle. We next meet on Thursday, 12th January.

Marlene Brookes

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## CURRENT AFFAIRS

### October meeting

We had a large number of topics to discuss with a rather smaller group than usual.

The first subject was about how we felt hearing the news that a Russian Aircraft Carrier had been sailing through the English Channel. As this was not illegal, we felt it was probably a political ploy.

A person has been fined for smoking in a car with a child travelling with him. We frowned on this but it was remarked that, as with using mobile phones while driving, it was difficult for the law to be enforced.

Are we too clean? It appears that there are more illnesses and allergies now which may be due to the fact that no immunity to germs is being built up.

There is a petition to stop the closure of Pharmacies. Would we sign it? Our group felt we need the local pharmacy and if Doctors prescribed less of the items which could be bought over the counter, a lot of Government money could be saved.

Is the UK likely to break up over Brexit. Wait and see was our response to this.

Another petition was discussed. This was to try and prevent building houses on Green Belt. We would hope that "affordable housing" should be built on Brown sites. Some of the group thought it was hypocritical of us to object as we were probably living in homes built on previous Green Belt land.

Has UKIP got a future? It would seem only if they can find a suitable leader and stop the infighting.

What season do we love most? We all preferred different seasons, Spring and Autumn were the most popular.

Another question asked was "what are our favourite TV and Radio programmes"? Not unexpectedly there were many different answers. Those mentioned were Dramas, such as Poldark, History, Documentaries on TV and on Radio, classical music, Michael Portillo, Last Word, From our own Correspondent and not forgetting The Archers.

After all that discussion we were only too glad to sit back with a cup of tea.

Pat Gorie

### November meeting

On 24 November 2016 six of us attempted to put the world to rights discussing the following questions.

1 A new book is published in which the notion that during WW2 Nazi leaders of the Third Reich were high on hard drugs, heroin and the like, Hitler in particular. Was this so? Discussion indicated that some of us had no knowledge of this but we're not surprised. Others had knowledge and are sure it is correct; it was suggested that Hitler took these drugs to combat Parkinson's Disease.

2 Where is Isis getting the resource to wage war in the Middle East? Discussion indicates from Saudi Arabia, Iran and independent international arms dealers using finance extorted from the people living in Isis occupied countries and Isis supporters worldwide.

3 Should the UK Government use the services of Nigel Farage as our ambassador to USA as advocated by Donald Trump? A unanimous 'No' was the result.

4 Do we think Donald Trump would introduce the many controversial changes he promised when on the presidential campaign. Discussion indicated 'No he would not'. He is already back tracking on some promises. We do not yet know the 'real Donald Trump'; only time will tell.

5 Is Virgin Care another step towards privatising the NHS? A 'Heated' discussion ensued! 'Yes' was the split decision. Virgin Care operate care homes on behalf of the NHS they are free for the users paid for by the NHS and it is claimed save the NHS and public money. The NHS generally provides very good care homes for the elderly; they should continue to do this. The likes of Virgin Care represent too many highly paid 'managers'; the NHS would be better advised to spend more money on doctors and nurses rather than 'commercial managers'

6 Is Ed Balls more popular as an entertainer than he was as a politician? Our decision was 'Yes'. He contributes as much as anyone to 'Strictly' and should keep going as long as the public vote for him. Strictly is as much an entertainment programme as a dance programme.

7 Public money is available for such things as new aircraft carriers, fighting wars in the Middle East, Trident etc. but not enough for the NHS. Do we think more money should be devoted to the NHS than to the Military? Discussion indicated 'Yes'.

Generally, our deliberations are amicable but on the odd occasion they are intense; however, when Margaret serves tea and cakes, peace and goodwill prevail and we all go home smiling.

Trevor Kinvig

**DANCING**

Recently Derek and Elizabeth joined the group to augment our numbers and Gerry and Veronica came back from France just in time to enjoy wine and mince pies, etc., as novelty dances and old favourites put us in Christmas mood. The group does now seem to be finding a successful formula for social dancing. But we do have room for another couple or two.....

Walter Mason  
Sam Chappell

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**DINING**

In December the Dining Group returned to the Legh Arms in Prestbury for our Christmas Lunch. Many of us arrived early and enjoyed coffee in the cosy lounge area. The original 15th century inn was named The Saracens Head to commemorate the Crusades.

When the current inn was built in 1627, the sign artist, by mistake, painted a black boy's head and that image has remained on the sign to this day although the inn has long been known as The Legh Arms.

Thirty four of us sat down to eat and I think everyone enjoyed themselves despite the pork being overcooked which was a shame as we have usually found the food to be excellent.



Our next lunch will be in February and names will be taken at the January meeting.

Jeanette Bell  
Dorothy Neillands

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**GARDENING**

The group starts off the New Year with a meal at the Deanwater on January 18th.

Walter Mason

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**GERMAN**

The German group rounded off the year with its annual pre-Christmas lunch at the Wycliffe Hotel on December 16th. There were 21 of us including partners. As usual we had an excellent meal served by the extremely friendly and efficient staff.



The group has now grown to 14 so unfortunately there are no vacancies at the moment. There has been no shortage of items to discuss and plenty of material available on the internet site of the Spiegel, the most reliable news magazine in Germany, as well as human interest stories from more popular sources.

Marlene Brookes

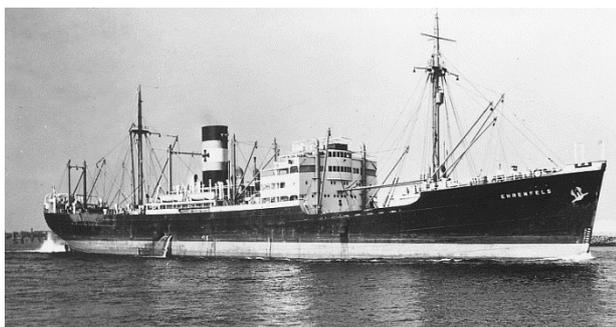
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## HISTORY

### The Last Action of the Calcutta Light Horse Cavalry by Terry Browne

Formed in 1872, the Calcutta Light Horse had been on reserve since the Boer War. Their claim to fame was due to their attack against the German merchant ship, Ehrenfels, in 1943, which was known to be transmitting information on allied ship movements to German U-boats from Mormugao harbour in Portugal's neutral territory of Goa.

The operation was kept covert to avoid the political ramifications of contravening Portuguese neutrality in Goa and was not revealed until thirty-five years later in 1978.



Fifteen volunteers from the Light Horse boarded the Ehrenfels after a very tortuous journey by small boat down the Hooghly River from Calcutta to Mormugao Harbour and sank the Ehrenfels. After the sinking, to deflect any suspicion, British Intelligence dispatched an open message over the air falsely warning that the British would invade Goa. The crews of the other two German merchant ships in the harbour then scuttled their ships in the belief that they were protecting them

from capture by the British.

During the first 11 days of March 1943, U-boats sank 12 Allied ships in the Indian Ocean. After the Light Horse raid on Goa, only one ship was lost in the remainder of the month.

The January meeting will be on Wednesday 18th January when a guest speaker, Kevin Dronfield will be giving a talk on when the Jacobites arrived in Stockport.

Pam Curley

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## OPERA APPRECIATION

Following a break, the group will restart with the Royal Opera's production of La Fille du Regiment. This is an amusing, light-hearted opera, with music by Donizetti and featuring Dawn French in a non-singing part. It has a demanding part for the tenor, requiring him to sing nine high C's in one aria.

Meg Humphries

**PHOTOGRAPHY**

Our group sorely needs new members. Meanwhile we have decided to continue, but with fewer meetings so we will be meeting every two months in 2017.

Competition subjects for 2017 are Christmas, Moonlight, Easter, Churches and Harvest.

The subject for the competition at the last meeting of the year was Gardening. Diane's picture taken on a cloudy day at Levens Hall in Kendal was adjudged the winner.

Please contact me if you are interested in joining this group.

Walter Mason



**QUIZ**

We continue to meet monthly on the fourth Thursday of the month.

Our November meeting was hosted by Margaret and the quiz set by Diane comprised rounds on Geography, Music, Science and Nature, Arts and Books, General Knowledge and In the News.

During our refreshment break we attempted to decipher food and drink items from chemical symbols, writers from anagrammed forms and to identify alter egos of various people. Members of the group also created the quiz for the Christmas party.

Please contact me for details if you are interested in this group.

Diane Saxon

**WALKING**



The November walk was led by Ruth and Dave, who led 22 on a pleasant circuit up to Eccles Pike from the Hanging Gate pub at Chapel, where most stayed to have a good value pensioners' meal surrounded by a colourful mass of Christmas baubles.



In December, Walter took 29 on a circular tour of Hyde and Godley, starting at Hyde Chapel, Gee Cross (where Beatrix Potter's parents married), ascending Werneth Low, then following Green Lane and a former railway line past Godley Green and finally coming up Gower Hey woods back to Gee Cross. A small tot of sherry helped us on our way as a rain shower threatened to dampen our spirits.

Afterwards, 31 squashed into the Stables Restaurant for a really excellent 3-course festive meal, rounded off by a presentation to Walter after leading the group for 11 years.



David Burke now takes over as Walking Group Leader in 2017.

Walter Mason